[Translation]

Development Fund

*73. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :
SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have initiated a proposal to set up a development fund for tourism to finance infrastructure projects undertaken by State Governments and NGOs at various travel destinations throughout the country;

(b) the sources of funding for the above; and

(c) the scope of utilisation and possible terms relating to interest rate, repayment period, etc. of projects assisted by the proposed funds?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) The details have not been finalised.

[English]

Water Logging in Irrigated Areas

*74. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any suitable technology has been developed to tide over the problem of water logging in canal irrigated areas;

(b) if so, the extent upto which this technology is being utilised; and

(c) the area in the country under water logging five years back and at present, separately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA) : (a) Yes, Sir. To tackle problem of water logging in canal irrigated areas both preventive and reclamative technology packages have been developed.

(b) Different techniques are being used in different States according to their circumstances.

(c) The waterlogged Area in canal commands in 1991 and at present is as follows:

Year	Waterlogged Area in lakh hectare	Remarks
1991	24.60	
1995-96	10.00	Only the States of Karnataka, Haryana, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Punjab have made the assessment recently. Other States have not made assessments till now.

[Translation]

National Highways

*75. SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether many National Highways in the country and particularly Highway Nos. 30 and 31 in Bihar are in a dilapidated condition;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the reasons for not starting work despite the approval of 'Estimates' for the doubling and strengthening of the above mentioned two Highways in Bihar; and

(d) the steps being taken to keep the National Highways in good conditions?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) All National Highways in the country including National Highway-30 and National Highway-31 in Bihar are generally being maintained in traffic worthy condition. Their maintenance is a continuous process and repairs as warranted are attended to from time to time. Due to incessant heavy rains in Bihar since end of June, 1997, pot holes have developed in some stretches of these two National Highways in Bihar and repairs of these are being attended to on emergent basis.

(c) Only one work namely "widening to 4-lanes in Km. 227 and Km. 228 (500 M) on NH-31" sanctioned under Job No. 031-BR-96-341 dated 31.10.1996 has not commenced so far due to delay in award of work caused due to representations during tender process.

(d) Improvement to National Highways is taken in phases through plan allocation and maintenance in general through non-plan allocation to the extent possible within available resources. Steps have also been taken for encouraging private sector participation for development works on NHs.

Production of Petroleum and Natural Gas

*76. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the production of petroleum and natural gas in the country during 1995-96 and 1996-97, institution-wise;